Gartner Research

Business Buyer Insights Primer for 2023

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Initiatives: Business Buyer Insights

> Business leaders are critical stakeholders in most enterprise technology buying decisions. Product leaders can use our business buyer insights research to better understand their drivers, needs and behaviors.

Scope

This initiative covers how business buyers in core corporate functions make technology buying decisions — what these buyers want, and how high-tech providers must adapt to that behavior.

Topics in this initiative include:

- **Customer Service and Support Leaders:** Explore the key customer service and support roles involved in technology spending decisions, persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.

- **Finance Leaders:** Explore the key finance roles involved in technology spending decisions, including persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.

- **Human Resources Leaders:** Explore the key human resources roles involved in technology spending decisions, including persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.
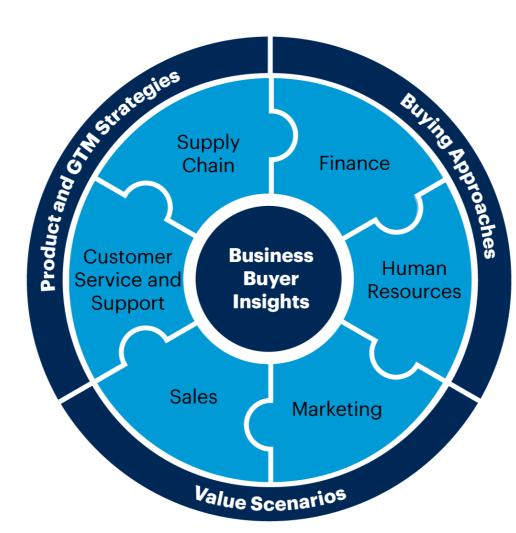
- **Marketing Leaders:** Explore the key marketing roles involved in technology spending decisions, including persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.

- **Sales Leaders:** Explore the key sales and revenue roles involved in technology spending decisions, including persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.

- **Supply Chain Leaders:** Explore the key supply chain roles involved in technology spending decisions, including persona attributes with impact on the buying journey, solution priorities in 2023 and beyond, as well as engagement best practices for the buyers in this function.

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Analysis

Figure 1. Business Buyer Insights Overview

Business Buyer Insights

Source: Gartner
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Technology buying is now a fully enterprisewide endeavor and two-thirds of people involved in technology buying decisions are not in IT. Even when IT is involved, two-thirds of those IT people report into the business units (see The Big Book of Technology Buyer Behavior). The need for tech provider product leaders to understand these buyers sitting in critical business functions is obvious. These buyers determine **why** the organization is buying — and the specific uses to which the technology will be put. What is less obvious, but no less important, is that these buyers — even within a common role or function — are not a homogeneous group in terms of **how** they buy.

When building product and go-to-market strategies, product leaders need trustworthy insight into both these roles and the business context in which they operate, and the circumstances driving technology use and investment. They also need evidence-based guidance on how best to engage and support these buyers to make buying decisions that will lead both provider and customer on to success.

Our business buyer insights in 2023 will provide a deeper investigation of the tech buying behavior of leaders and their teams in six core functions in the enterprise:

1. Customer service and support

2. Finance

3. Human resources (HR)

4. Marketing

5. Sales

6. Supply chain management

Topics

Our business buyer research will equip you with the necessary insights to match your offerings and go-to-market execution to what your business customers need and want, so that you can acquire, retain and expand your relationships, and revenue, with customers.

Our research in this area addresses the following topics:

Customer Service and Support Leaders

Customer service and support functions are experiencing shifts in how customers prefer to engage to obtain information, guidance and assistance with the products or services they are using. Due to the growing application of technology to serve this need, the nature of these interactions have changed, which impacts the employee experience and role. This function represents a robust opportunity for technology providers and substantial growth is expected in technology spending. [1] This research will provide the essential insights on the buyers in this function for effective product and go-to-market decisions.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do customer service leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do customer service departments approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address customer service buyers?

Recommended Content

⚷ Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- Customer Service and Support Leader Persona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Customer Service and Support Function

- IT Services Providers Play a Leading Role in the Purchase of Customer Service and Support Solutions

- Top Objectives Driving Customer Service and Support Software Investments Quick

- Answer: Which New Software Purchases Are Making an Impact for Customer Service and Support Buyers?

- Magic Quadrant for Customer Service BPO

Planned Research

- Customer service buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- Customer service buyers 2023 messaging priorities

- Customer service value scenarios

- Customer service buyer influencer maps

- Customer service buying basics

Finance Leaders

Chief financial officers (CFOs) are drivers of the digitalization agenda in many organizations. They are key buyers of technology, not only in the finance department, but across the entire enterprise. CFOs are increasingly informed and looking for improved returns from their digital investments. With competition for CFO mind share higher than ever, conventional B2B marketing tactics no longer break through. Product leaders need to understand what really influences CFOs in order to engage these high-value stakeholders and their teams effectively.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do finance leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do finance departments approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address finance buyers?

Recommended Content

⚷ Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- Finance Leader Persona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Finance Function

- Product Leaders Can Reach More Finance Buyers in Solution Discovery by Prioritizing Channel Partners

- Top Objectives Driving Finance Tech Investments

- Quick Answer: Which New Software Purchases Are Making an Impact for Finance Buyers?

- Hype Cycle for Finance Data and Analytics Governance, 2022

Planned Research

- Finance buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- Finance buyers 2023 messaging priorities

- Finance value scenarios

- Finance buyer influencer maps

- Finance buying basics, 2023

Human Resources Leaders

The events of the past few years have driven chief HR officers (CHROs) further into the corporate limelight, as trends impacting the workforce, new ways of working and the ongoing competition for talent emphasize HR's scope of impact on the organization. In a period of significant disruption, HR functions are being asked to optimize costs while also responding to increased demands from the business. In this environment, technology has a role to play and successful product leaders will help HR buyers navigate the changes to the organization's workforce with confidence.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do HR leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do HR departments approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address HR buyers?

Recommended Content

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- Human Resources Leader Persona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Human Resources Function

- Emphasize Security Capabilities to Convince Discerning HR Buyers to Choose You

- Top Objectives Driving HR Software Investments

- Quick Answer: Which New Software Purchases Are Making an Impact for HR Buyers?

- Hype Cycle for Human Capital Management Technology, 2022

Planned Research

- HR buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- HR buyers 2023 messaging priorities

- HR value scenarios

- HR buyer influencer maps

- HR buying basics, 2023

Marketing Leaders

Chief marketing officers (CMOs) and their teams face four key trends shaping their marketing technology (martech) strategy shifting resourcing and responsibilities across the marketing organization, technical skills gaps, a cookieless future and the requirement for a successful partnership with IT. [2] CMOs need allies in this environment and tech providers targeting them in 2023 will require a nuanced understanding of their business situation and drivers in order to engage successfully. In addition, considerations such as greater integration between marketing and sales will prove both a challenge and an opportunity for marketing leaders — and for the product leaders who enable them.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do marketing leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do marketing departments approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address marketing buyers?

Recommended Content

🔑 Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- Marketing LeaderPersona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Marketing Function

- News Flash: Marketing Buyers Don't Get Their Product Information From Vendors

- Top Objectives Driving Marketing Software Investments

- Quick Answer:Which NewSoftware Purchases AreMaking an Impact for Marketing Buyers?

- Hype Cycle for Digital Marketing, 2022

Planned Research

- Marketing buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- How to market to marketing buyers

- Marketing value scenarios

- Marketing buyer influencer maps

- Marketing buying basics, 2023

Sales Leaders

Chief sales officers (CSOs) and their organizations are not immune to significant winds of change — contending with changing customer buying behaviors and preferences, ongoing economic uncertainty and a challenging sales labor market. [3] Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and automation, and engagement technologies hold great promise to present greater revenue enablement. However, CSOs will require greater guidance from providers to make compelling cases for investment. Product leaders targeting buyers in sales need insight into the specific factors making technology investments essential in 2023.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do sales leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do sales departments approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address sales buyers?

Recommended Content

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- Sales Leader Persona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Sales Function

- Find Your Ideal Sales Technology Buyer by Understanding the Reality of Their RevTech Stack and Existing Skills

- Top Objectives Driving RevTech Software Investments

- Quick Answer: Which New Software Purchases Are Making an Impact for Sales Buyers?

- Hype Cycle for CRM Sales Technology, 2022

Planned Research

- Sales buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- Sales buyers 2023 messaging priorities

- Sales value scenarios

- Sales buyer influencer maps

- Sales buying basics, 2023

Supply Chain Leaders

Supply chain leaders have been responding to labor and raw materials shortages, negotiating the impacts of climate risk and increasing stakeholder demands. [4] The nexus of these forces is leading to supply chain management organizations needing to make significant shifts in their executional abilities — moving from location to human-centric work design; to move beyond real-time analytics to real-time decision execution; to uplevel their sustainability execution; and, a shift from operational excellence to commercial innovation. Technology is at the heart of resolving these challenges and the change they represent. Product leaders will need to work in lockstep with supply chain leaders to help position the required change into the wider enterprise.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do supply chain leaders want to make use of technology in their function and what capabilities do they need?

- How do supply chain organizations approach decisions for technology to support their department?

- How can product and go-to-market strategies change to address supply chain buyers?

Recommended Content

⚷ Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- Supply Chain Leader Persona Priorities

- Technology Solutions Map for the Supply Chain Function

- Top Engagement Channels to Generate High-Quality Leads for Supply Chain Software

- Top Objectives Driving Supply Chain Software Investments

- Quick Answer: Which New Software Purchases Are Making an Impact for Supply Chain Buyers?

- Hype Cycle for Supply Chain Strategy, 2022

Planned Research

- Supply chain buyers sources of regret in the buying journey

- Supply chain buyers 2023 messaging priorities

- Supply chain value scenarios

- Supply chain buyer influencer maps

- Supply chain buying basics, 2023

Suggested First Steps

- The Big Book of Technology Buyer Behavior

- Crossing the New Chasm: The Dynamics of Cross-Functional B2B Buying Decisions

- Quick Answer: What Are the Most Critical Elements of an Effective Enterprise Persona?

- Quick Answer: What Is a Value Scenario, and Why Does It Matter?

- Gartner's Tech Growth and Innovation Conference

Essential Reading

- Research Connections: The High Cost of Purchase Regret and What to Do About It

- The High Cost of Buyer Regret to Product Leaders

- Resources for Product Leaders to Reduce Buyer Regret

- What 'No-Regret' Technology Buyers Do Differently

- The Regret Reduction Playbook

- The Key Drivers of High Regret Technology Purchase Decisions

- The Key Drivers of High-Quality Technology Deals

- Drive High-Quality Deals — Not Just Sales — by Getting Users on Board

Acronym Key and Glossary Terms

AI	artificial intelligence
B2B	business-to-business
CFO	chief financial officer
CHRO	chief human resources officer
CSO	chief sales officer
GTM	go-to-market
HR	human resources
martech	marketing technology
ML	machine learning

Evidence

[1] Top Priorities for Customer Service and Support Leaders in 2022.

[2] The Chief Marketing Officer.

[3] Leadership Vision for 2023: Chief Sales Officer.

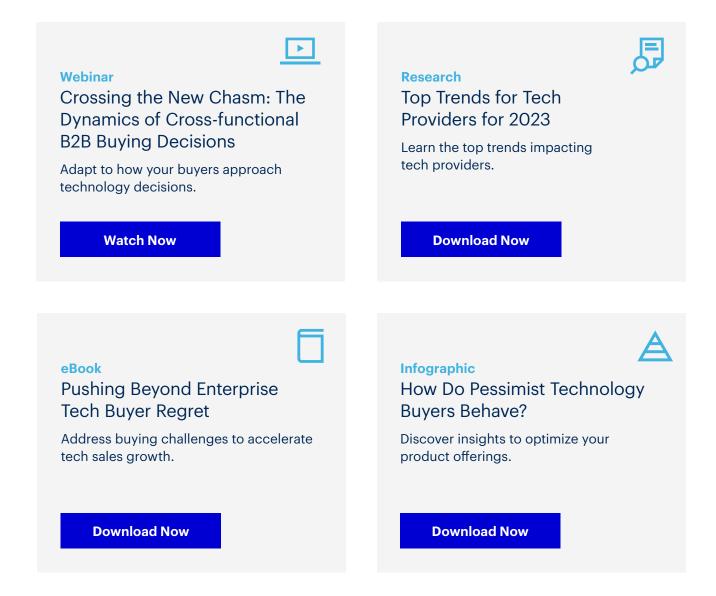[4] CSCO Strategic Leadership Primer for 2022.

Related Priorities

Initiative Name	Description
Technology Market Essentials	This initiative helps organizations harness growth opportunities by providing a quantitative fact base with market analysis and insights on market dynamics and technology trends.
Emerg. Tech & Trends Impact on Products & Services	Use this initiative to discover, strategically assess, monetize and integrate emerging technologies and trends (ETTs) in products and solutions.
Tech Buying Behavior	This initiative covers technology buyer behavior — how organizations and the people in them make buying decisions, what these buyers want and how high-tech providers must adapt to that behavior.
Business of High Tech	This initiative covers the commercial dynamics of the high-tech industry. It concentrates on strategies for growing revenue, innovation, disruption and competitive advantage.
Customer-Led Growth Strategies	This initiative covers synchronization across functions to reach revenue and retention goals using common operational and customer success strategies and provide value for customers and organizations.

Actionable, objective insight

Position your organization for success. Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for high-tech leaders:

Webinar

Crossing the New Chasm: The Dynamics of Cross-functional B2B Buying Decisions

Adapt to how your buyers approach technology decisions.

Watch Now

Research

Top Trends for Tech Providers for 2023

Learn the top trends impacting tech providers.

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eBook

Pushing Beyond Enterprise Tech Buyer Regret

Address buying challenges to accelerate tech sales growth.

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Infographic

How Do Pessimist Technology Buyers Behave?

Discover insights to optimize your product offerings.

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